



District Tides

NORFOLK DISTRICT

Fall 2006
Vol. 20 No. 3

*Repair work
at the beach!*

Also in this issue...

**The Chamberlin
Hotel comes back
to life**

Hurricane!
*How to get out and
whom to call*

**PAO to release
new monthly
publication**

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District Tides

Commander's Corner

It is my privilege and honor to command the Norfolk Engineer District. I am extremely proud of all the contributions the Corps and the Norfolk District have accomplished for our nation and for the Commonwealth of Virginia. The ability, commitment and competence of our workforce are simply second to none.

Over the past 230 years, the United States has grown from a loosely-organized confederation of 13 English colonies scattered along the Atlantic seaboard to a superpower whose influence reaches around the globe.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers contributed immeasurably to that rise of our nation. First, as the shield of the Republic, when the Corps was constructing and breaching fortresses during our nation's vulnerable early years; and then later, as a significant force, with the Corps' construction efforts, that enabled our nation's expansion, economic development and

world-wide reach.

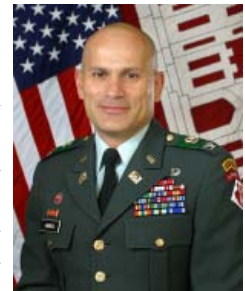
The strength, character, resourcefulness and experience of the Corps over the years have been and continue to be traits of which we can all be proud. We can also be equally proud of our own District's history, now approaching 130 years of service to the nation and Commonwealth.

I am excited that together we will continue this great tradition, and do our part towards contributing to our nation's success as we execute our military, civil works, regulatory and real estate responsibilities within the Commonwealth of Virginia on behalf of the federal government.

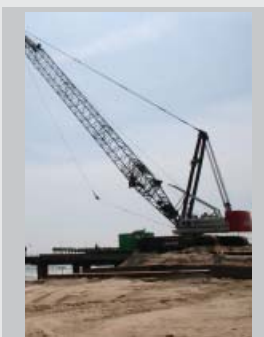
Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "Do not go where the path may lead; go instead where there is no path and leave a trail." This "expeditionary" attitude is exactly what made our district successful over the years, and I am confident this attitude will continue to move us forward.

Our program over the coming years promises to be very strong. It will collectively challenge all of us. Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC), Craney Island expansion, Deep Creek Bridge, Fort Norfolk access and enhancement, safe navigation, coastal storm/flood damage reduction, ecosystem management and water supply sustainability are just a few areas that are on the horizon.

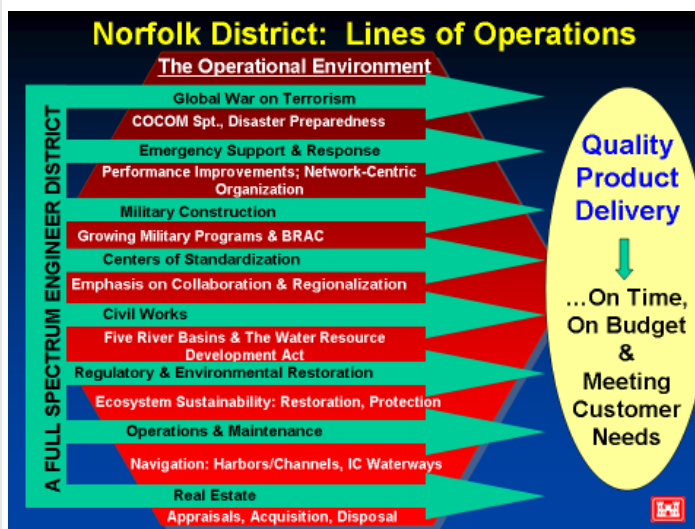
We must focus our efforts along our eight Lines of Operations as we continue to adapt to our operational environment as depicted in the chart accompanying this column. Mission, People and Safety are our



Col. Dionysios Anninos



A crane stands ready to build more pieces of the trestle system that will support it when it is offshore at the Virginia Beach, Va. oceanfront. (Photo by Patrick Bloodgood)



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Commander's Corner: Continued focus on the future

Continued from Page 2

foundation and means to remain focused on teamwork as well as maintaining our core competencies. Because, at the end of the day, we must deliver quality products to our customers on time and within budget in order to remain relevant.

Finally, as our nation approaches its fifth year at war, I would ask that we all take time to reflect, say thanks and support those who have served, are serving and those who will serve in this global conflict. We all owe them a great deal of gratitude for our freedoms and for our way of life. Peace does have a price!

In closing, I thank each one of you for

your outstanding day-to-day contributions and accomplishments. Without your efforts, the District could not possibly deliver quality products while meeting customer needs. I also thank you for your gracious welcome extended to me, my wife and sons, as we have joined this wonderful Norfolk District family.

Be proud of our Corps heritage, be proud of your accomplishments and continue to contribute to our nation and organization!

Essays, Col. Dionysios Anninos

And the winner is...



Congratulations to Wendy Metcalf in Architecture Section on designing the new District Commander's Coin. Look for the official unveiling at the next town hall.

Donations needed for troops overseas

Story by Patrick Bloodgood

For those in the district who have been deployed or have family members deployed, they know how much a care package means when you are miles away from home. With that mindset, the Family Readiness Group here at the Norfolk District prepares care packages for District employees and their immediate family members who are deployed to far-away places.

The Family Readiness Group is always looking for donations to send to those who are near and dear to the heart of the Norfolk District. Over the next couple of weeks, donation boxes will be placed near the elevators in the lobby for those who would like to send a little piece of home to those who can't be home.

A few suggestions for donations

- Hand sanitizer (travel size)
- Hard candy
- Eye glasses wipes (travel size)
- Hand wipes
- Crossword puzzles, word searches, Reading materials
- Microwave popcorn
- Foot powder
- Cookies (that won't melt)
- Powdered Gatorade or crystal light
- Disposable razors
- Granola bars (non-melting chocolate kind)
- *plus many more items*

For more information or ideas on items to donate contact Jerri Werhle in IMO.

Col. Anninos assumes command of Norfolk District



North Atlantic Division Commander, Maj. Gen. William T. Grisoli (right) passes the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers flag to Col. Dionysios Anninos during the change of command ceremony on June 30.

Story and photo by Patrick Bloodgood

In traditional military pomp and circumstance, Col. Yvonne J. Prettyman-Beck relinquished the Army Corps of Engineers flag to Col. Dionysios Anninos at 10:57 a.m., June 30, symbolizing the completion of her three-year command. With that symbolic gesture, Col. Anninos officially became the Norfolk District Commander.

In his comments, Grisoli remarked "Dan (Col. Anninos), take care of your customers, your mission and the people in this wonderful organization, as well as those in Hampton Roads and the Commonwealth of Virginia. You do that, and you can't go wrong."

After recognizing his family and those who have helped him throughout his military career, Anninos commented that he was "extremely honored and humbled to take over the helm of this dedicated and professional organization."



What's 'Spat?'

Baby oysters beginning to grow and thrive on Corps' reefs

"Sometimes, nature just takes a little while ... even with help from scientists and engineers. But, we're now beginning to see the results of our hard work!"

Dave Schulte, Marine Biologist, Norfolk District, Army Corps of Engineers.

Story by Terry McCann

One day in late August, Dave Schulte got a tip from a local waterman... "something special is happening on the Norfolk District's oyster reefs on the Great Wicomico River." So, on Aug 25, Schulte, a marine biologist with the District, along with colleagues from the Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences (VIMS), ventured out to see if what they'd heard was true: Could native oysters, at long last, actually be growing on these Army Corps-built reefs?

What they discovered was that baby oysters (spat) are not only growing, but growing in droves on oyster shells throughout the three reefs they checked. Based on their count, they estimated as



An oyster shell from the Corps' Great Wicomico oyster reefs, showing baby oysters, or spat (arrow), growing in large numbers; an estimated 2,000 spat per bushel of oyster shells. (Photo by Patrick Bloodgood)

many as 2,000 spat per bushel of oyster shells were growing – a phenomenal number, especially considering that they had sampled these same reefs this past spring, noting that the reefs were in good condition, yet there were very

few live oysters on them. Schulte says he had been hoping for a good spatset, due in large part to the extensive seeding the Army Corps has been doing in the river since last year. "The quantity of oysters now growing on the surveyed oyster reefs in the Great Wicomico mirrors what was typical of what the James River seed oyster beds used to produce in the 1960's."

Schulte expects the current count of young oysters to increase, since larval oysters are still settling on the reefs and some were too small for he and his VIMS colleagues to see. The

message, however, is that a major milestone has been reached for this Army Corps' project: The project is "now up and running; getting good oyster recruitment on the Corps' reefs has been achieved," says Schulte.

The CPAC Moment with Paula Bradshaw

Keeping online tabs on employee benefits

All benefits for Army-civilian employees may now be accessed through the Army Benefits Center-Civilian (ABC-C) at www.abc.army.mil. Remember that you will need a password and login to access the information.

Effective July 24, a new and improved process started that will make it easier for you to access the Army Benefits Center. This new process adds an improved degree of security to your personal information. You may still access this site through the ABC-C as stated above or through the Army Portal at www.cpol.army.mil. The computer screens will look the same, except you will no longer be prompted to enter your Point of Entry (POE) password. Authentication will now be done by using your "AKO" user ID and password.

The ABC-C Web site provides a full range of benefit and entitlement services to Army employees. Additionally, ABC-C provides all advisory and transaction processing services for Federal Employees' Health Benefits (FEHB); Federal

Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI); Thrift Savings Plan (TSP); retirements to include Federal Employees' Retirement System (FERS) and Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS); and survivor benefits (death and dismemberment).

Timely reminders:

- The Thrift Savings Plan no longer has open seasons. You can make changes to your TSP account at any time.
- The Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) and Federal Flexible Spending Account (FSAFEDS) open seasons will be from Nov. 13, to Dec. 11, 2006.

Lynnhaven flows straight after removal of leg

Story and photo by Patrick Bloodgood

Thanks to the Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District, boaters traversing in and out of the Lynnhaven River Channel no longer have to face running aground as they navigate the curved “dogleg” which greeted them as they neared the Lesner Bridge in Virginia Beach, Va. The entrance channel now boasts a straight shot which took a little more than a year to complete.

The “dogleg” in the channel was created to avoid a shipwreck which was discovered in 1994. Because of the possible historic nature of the wreck, engineers had to guide vessel traffic away from it until underwater-archeologists could study the wreck and eventually remove it. For boaters, however, the “dogleg” created problems during low visibility and rough seas, causing some to run aground as they made the turn.

Historic wreck lifted from the channel floor

The Norfolk District began removal of the shipwreck on Sept. 22, 2004. Underwater-archaeologists combed the site looking for pieces and artifacts, anything that would provide a clue to the ship's history. Sections of the wreck were brought to the surface and transported to Craney Island, where archaeologists could peer over the artifacts on dry land and begin stabilizing the pieces to prevent them from crumbling in the open air.

During the vessel recovery operation, a cannon was also discovered, which at one time was active until it fell to rest at the bottom of “Davy Jones’ locker”. The cannon, along with the other recovered artifacts, were cleaned and properly documented by Tidewater Atlantic Research, Inc., based in Washington, N.C.

Pilots have say in channel design

Part of the process after removal of the shipwreck was determining the best route for vessels traversing in and out of the channel. Members of the Virginia Pilot Association and the Association of Maryland Pilots, who operate from the Lynnhaven Channel, were asked to participate and give feedback. These pilots meet container ships as they enter the Chesapeake Bay and guide them to their ports of call. On any given day they make numerous runs in and out of the channel, ferrying personnel to and from their ships.

In coordination with the U.S Army Corps of Engineers Coastal and Hydraulics Laboratory in Vicksburg, Miss., the

Pilots were put into realistic simulators and asked for their input on which path should be dredged.

Dredging begins and channel fights back

On April 22, 2005, the straightening of the channel began with the \$1.5 million dredging contract awarded to Woodside Construction Company. The project allows for safe passage of vessels up to a depth of 10 feet from the channel inlet to Broadway, and include side channels and a turning basin.

For the dredging contractor, the Lynnhaven Channel proved to be a noble adversary, demonstrating she still had the bite that claimed many a tall ship in her history. The dredges were breaking down from the amount of material they had to move, the project started to get behind schedule and even one met the fate of the 200-year-old shipwreck when it sank.

For Norfolk District Project Manager Gregg Williams, the Lynnhaven Channel tested the district's policies and procedures regarding contractor issues.

“With all the problems we experienced, we learned that our system works,” said Williams. “There are reasons we require our contractors to be bonded and insured. When things started to progress down the path they did, we turned to the bonding agent and got the job done.”

Residents receive benefits beyond boating

With the channel now straightened, area boaters face less risk of running aground and damaging their boats. Boaters are not the only ones who benefited from the dredging project. More than 200,000 cubic yards of high quality beach sand was dredged during the project and then placed onto the

Ocean Park Beach in Virginia Beach.

“It's environmentally sound. We are keeping material in the sediment system; it's not going to a landfill or to another area,” said Williams.

The newly replenished beach will also help to protect high-value homes and businesses in the area from tidal surges and flooding in the event of a tropical storm, hurricane or Nor'easter’.

“The cool thing about this project was all the stuff that went with it: an archaeological

site to conserve the hull of a historic shipwreck; a full-blown navigation study that brought in the Pilots’ Association and the Corps’ Coastal and Hydraulics Laboratory to help in redesigning the channel; and beach replenishment that benefits all local residents,” said Williams. “Overall, the project was a huge success.”



The Lesner Bridge sits over the newly dredged portion of the Lynnhaven River.



Beach Repair!

Preparations underway to clear clogged 16th Street outflow pipes

Story by Patrick Bloodgood

Beachgoers and vacationers enjoy the sites and sounds of the waves crashing along the Virginia Beach oceanfront as the rays of the midday August sun tan their skins to a golden brown. Meanwhile, children frolic in the waves just a few hundred yards from contractors working for the Norfolk District.

The employees of sub-contractor Precon Marine Industries, Inc. are placing pilings 36-feet into the soft ocean sand to support a trestle system. This carefully crafted system will serve as a platform for repair work being performed on the outflow pipes that extend as far away as 2,000 feet from shore at the 16th Street Pump Station.

As the trestle is being assembled, a crane will sit atop the structure extending it into the water. In order to get the structure into place offshore, the crane will remove a section off

the rear of the trestle and place it in front, essentially walking the trestle into place.

This frenzy of activity on the oceanfront brings with it plenty of curious onlookers, who gaze through the safety perimeter fence trying to figure out why a section of the beach is closed.

"They're interested in seeing what's going on and if the structure will become a permanent pier," said Norfolk District Construction Representative, Broderick "Buff" Jackson.



Steel girders are hoisted into the air by a crane shortly before it rolls onto the trestle system. (Photo by Patrick Bloodgood)



Under the watchful eyes of curious beachgoers, a contractor uses a safety guideline to assist the crane operator position a section of the trestle system in place. (Photo By Patrick Bloodgood)

(Left) Contractors continue to assemble the trestle extending further offshore. (Photo By Christian Brumm)

Once the temporary structure is in place the real work of replacing the underwater manhole covers and clearing sand from the four, 48-inch pipes begins. Originally, the plan called for replacing the manhole covers with more permanent fittings and to perform maintenance work on the system's flap gates. During the preparation phase, however, a problem was discovered.

Accumulated sand poses challenge

"We performed a Side-Scan Sonar survey and discovered there was no way to access the manhole covers because they were heavily impacted with sand," said Norfolk District Project Engineer, Christian Brumm.

The clogged pipes only allowed the pumps to drain water from the oceanfront out a mere 750 feet; not the needed 2,000 feet.

"There is no harm to the general public, but if you create a hurricane protection system that is supposed to discharge at 2,000 feet, then you want it to work properly," commented Brumm.

To get the water to discharge at the 2,000-foot mark, Glenn Underwater Services will employ a Hydroblast System that will be lowered into the manhole. A high-pressure water jet nozzle will then loosen the accumulated sand, while a powerful submersible vacuum pump sucks the sand slurry out of and away from the pipes.

Once completed, the manhole covers will be capped with a more permanent structure. Finally, beachgoers and vacationers on the oceanfront can once again view the crane and trestle system "walk" back to shore.

"It's been a heck of a project so far, a good one," said Jackson.

To get more information about the project and see a diagram of the pump stations outflow pipes, visit the district's Web page at www.nao.usace.army.mil and click on "Items of Interest" (16th Street Pump Station)



On-time, on-budget

Army Corps delivers critical Langley AFB upgrades

Story by Jerry Rogers

When you want significant upgrades to your 10,000-foot airfield in 60 days or less, who do you call? The Air Combat Command at Langley Air Force Base in Hampton, Va., had that challenge and called on their Army brethren with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Army Corps took on the task and demolished several portions of the base's aging airfield and replaced it by mixing, placing and fashioning 1,293,438 square feet of 18.5-inch deep Portland Cement Concrete slabs.

Now completed, this \$10 million critical airfield repair will better ensure safe operations for pilots and airframes for one of the Air Force's flagship bases and home of the first two operational F-22A Raptor squadrons.

The urgency of this Corps mission, part of a two-phased, in-house design and construction project, was necessary because the entire Langley flight line would be closed down and the Raptor and F-15 Eagle squadrons deployed to other military installations until the project was completed. In addition to the Corps' mission, 15 associated airfield projects are under way by the Air Force at a total repair cost of nearly \$40 million. Of that amount, the Corps work will total \$28 million.

In accepting this time-critical mission, which began in earnest May 30, Norfolk District engineers knew exactly what their goal was: To complete this phase of the construction project on time and within budget, recalled Project Manager Jonathan Jones, who added, "and that's exactly what we did."

Expertise in military design and construction

The Norfolk District military construction mission supports the Army, Army Reserve, Army National Guard and the Air Force at eight military installations throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. Experts in engineering, architectural design and construction management, Norfolk District's responsibilities extend to such diverse military construction projects as hospitals, fitness centers, family housing, child development centers, barracks, commissaries, munitions production systems, control towers, Air Force squadron facilities such as Langley's F-22A Raptor squadron, armed forces recruiting centers, airfield upgrades and more.

Like any time-sensitive and critical project, Norfolk District, along with its partners, began their planning and preparation well before the first slab of aging concrete was demolished. Then, in March 2006, the contract to remove and replace the large portion of Taxiway Alpha and the East Parking Apron was awarded to Hi-Way Paving Inc., a small business based in Columbus, Ohio. Hi-Way Paving prepared required submittals, set up a batch plant on site and procured



Norfolk District's contractor, Hi-Way Paving, Inc., uses the Sliform Concrete Paver-Finisher to place and finish the 18.5-inch deep slabs of concrete. (Photo by John Clark)

needed materials to produce the massive amounts of concrete necessary for 24/7 operations. Hi-way Paving also proposed a more aggressive schedule than that specified in the original contract.

Can-do contractor, team approach

"During the 60-day runway closure, the only work specified in the phase 1 contract was the removal and replacement of Taxiway Alpha," explained Jones. "Hi-Way Paving felt it could also complete the 120-foot wide path along the south portion of the East Apron, referred to as the Flight Line Road area. This work was originally scheduled for later this fall. Langley officials approved the schedule change. Completion of the Flight Line Road area would allow jet fighters direct access to all of the base's maintenance hangars," continued Jones.

On May 30, Hi-Way Paving hit the "concrete" running. Its new aggressive schedule called for achieving several critical milestones in the first 28 days. While it met each of those milestones, the project was not without its challenges: Days of torrential rain, a record-breaking heat wave, a schedule change to replace an additional 250 feet of Taxiway Alpha and the expansion of the Hammerhead taxiway entry point leading directly to the runway. The Corps drew up a design for the Hammerhead in just 30 days and performed a sole-source, set-aside Small Minority (8A) Business contract with Alutiiq Corp., an Alaskan Native Indian small business. The Hammerhead expansion was completed during the runway closure.

All of these potential delays in meeting the 60-day schedule were overcome through a strong partnership formed between the Army Corps of Engineers field team, the Air Combat Command's project manager, the 1st Fighter Wing Civil

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Airfield project completed, Langley 'birds' return home

Continued from Page 8

Engineer Squadron Construction team, and the can-do contractor, Hi-Way Paving. "Together we worked through every potential delay; we agreed from the beginning that failure was not an option," said Jones.

Air Combat Command Project Manager Barb Wilt, echoed these sentiments stating, "The team effort between the Corps' Norfolk District and the base has been outstanding."

On Day 60, the "Birds" land

On July 27, the Corps project delivery team conducted a final walk-thru inspection of Taxiway Alpha and Flight Line Road. Air Force officials accepted the project the following afternoon. Later that day, exactly 60 days from the start of the project, the first wave of Raptors and Eagles, cruising in groups of two, made their traditional fly-by prior to safely landing on their refurbished airfield. The remaining jet fighters touched down later that evening and the next day.

"Without the cooperation and communication between Hi-Way Paving, the Army Corps of Engineers, and the U.S. Air Force, we would not have been able to finish the project on time," said Ed Wessel, Project and Quality Control manager for Hi-Way Paving. "Our experience with these types of fast-

track projects is that open communication is not a luxury, it is a job requirement."



After two months of being under repair the Langley Air Force Base airfield was reopened to the F-22A Raptors and F-15 Eagles that are stationed there.

District Safety

Football season is back, time to think about PPE

Story by Rickey Brown

It's that time of year! Football players on all levels, high school, collegiate and professional are gearing up, putting on their Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and hitting the gridiron for another bone-crunching, action-packed season. The PPE worn by the players is designed to protect them from injuries while they are slamming into each other en route to a win for their team.

Just like the football players on the field, PPE is worn by employees here who work throughout the Norfolk District's area and resident offices. While not the same type of personal protection that those heroes of the gridiron wear, the PPE that employees are required to wear serves the same purpose of protecting the worker from injury.



Wearing PPE is a requirement (EM 385-1-1, Section 5, Personal Protective and Safety Equipment) and it is enforced by project engineers and area and resident engineers for all government employees and contractors. In other words, everybody is responsible for looking after everybody else.

PPE is to be worn by everyone who is visiting or working on all government

construction sites and in any situations where the use of such equipment is warranted.

Safe at work; safe at home

PPE (gloves, aprons, dust masks, hats, goggles, etc.) is not limited to the worksite, but should also be worn when performing chores around the house or working on hobbies... any work-related project that could result in physical injury.

Norfolk District Commander, Col. Dyonisios Anninos has placed a very high priority on safety for all district employees. This safety imperative includes private contractors who perform jobs at construction projects on government installations and at civil works projects throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Accidents do happen! Help to protect yourself, as well as your love ones from injuries through the use of PPE.



Hurricane Central

Emergency managers plan to get people out

Story by Patrick Bloodgood

Hurricane season is in full swing! With that in mind, local, state and federal emergency management officials have been working diligently to develop plans to evacuate Hampton Roads, the Eastern Shore and other vulnerable flood-prone areas in the Commonwealth. Planners have conducted tabletop exercises to determine how well the plan would go if a full-blown evacuation were to occur.

The Waterfield Building, headquarters of Norfolk District, falls under evacuation guidelines set by the city of Norfolk and the Commonwealth of Virginia. Employee residences fall under the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth and the localities in which they reside. Because of the amount of people living in Hampton Roads and the limited number of highways, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has devised an evacuation plan which includes specific routes and evacuation times by geographical area.



Emergency Management officials strongly urge community members to have an evacuation plan in place well before the order is given to evacuate. Officials also state that you should develop a checklist to ensure you don't overlook anything that you should take with you, especially while under the stress of having to evacuate. Know where you're going, how you're going

to get there, and have a secondary contact person who knows your whereabouts.

Extensive evacuation information for the different localities in Hampton Roads and the Eastern Shore can be found on VDOT's Web site at: <http://www.virginiadot.org/comtravel/hurricane-evac-hro.asp>.

Accountability; whom to call after the storm

Story by Patrick Bloodgood

Within hours after a major storm system has passed, focus within the Norfolk District shifts from preparation to response. One of the very first actions that the District Commander and his Emergency Management team perform is accountability.

"Whether you're a contractor or employee here, the commander's first priority is 100 percent accountability," said Emergency Management Officer, Deborah Massenburg. "How we are going to accomplish this is our challenge."

It's challenging because a major storm can adversely impact so many of our everyday amenities, such as downed phone lines, the internet and various utilities.

"The real obstacle is locating those employees who stay behind in the event of an evacuation," said Massenburg, who added, "Those who do evacuate will probably still have phone access and power."

Massenburg wants employees to first inform their

supervisor of their intentions, and then provide them with contact information before they leave. After the storm has passed, the District will activate its emergency telephonic notification roster, and each branch/section chief will begin calling personnel for accountability and to ensure they are safe.

Massenburg encourages employees not to wait for their branch/section chiefs to contact them, but to initiate calls to their supervisors.

If you still have not heard from your supervisor or can't reach the District, Headquarters USACE has established a special hotline number: (877) HI-USACE, and an e-mail address: 877.hi.usace@usace.army.mil. District employees need to provide their name, work location, and their contact information.

"Our goal is 100 percent accountability in as short a time as possible," stressed Massenburg. "We realize that there are employees who may be difficult to account for, and we want to focus our efforts on them."

Historic Chamberlin Hotel lives!

Norfolk District Real Estate Branch makes hotel revival a reality



The venerable Chamberlin Hotel has stood vacant since 2003.
(Photos by Patrick Bloodgood)

Story by Jerry Rogers

Thanks to months of tireless behind-the-scenes work by Norfolk District's Real Estate Branch, on June 21 the once-majestic Chamberlin Hotel on historic Fort Monroe began its "visible" journey toward revival and restoration. Armada Hoffer Construction Company, based in Virginia Beach, Va., began the \$50 million renovation project to transform the landmark building into an independent living apartment community which will provide residents with meals, housekeeping, transportation and unmatched views of the Chesapeake Bay and the Hampton Roads Harbor.



Plans are to retain several original entrance ways.

On Nov. 30, 2004, Norfolk District's Chief of Real Estate Branch, Dillard Horton, executed an Army 50-year ground lease agreement allowing the purchase of the hotel. Prior to the lease agreement, the once-grand hotel stood in a state of total disrepair and non-use, floundering for 17 months in Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. The lease agreement signing paved the way for OPC Hampton, LLC to move forward with its planning to convert the hotel complex into a retirement community with emphasis on retired military.

"This lease signing results in a win-win situation for the U.S. Army, the developer and the Hampton Roads community," said Horton.

The Chamberlin Hotel's renovation project is being assisted by Drucker & Falk, a local real estate management firm who will manage the apartment complex. The first apartment units should be ready for occupancy in the spring of 2008; the project is set for completion later that year, said Superintendent Dean Larson of Armada Hoffer. The firm's plans include renovating the 283 hotel rooms into 130 upscale apartments.

The Chamberlin traces its roots back to the first hotel built on the site in 1896. A massive fire gutted the building 24 years later, and the current building was erected in 1928.

With a commanding view of the Chesapeake Bay, future residents should definitely get their money's worth when it comes to the Chamberlin's 1920's-era charm, said officials at Armada Hoffer, who provided details on their restoration efforts.

The first floor, with the exception of a few historic walls and the original pool, will be demolished. It will be replaced with administration offices and walk-out apartments. The second floor lobby will remain from stem to stern, with the original lighting being sent out for restoration. The existing terrazzo floors will be repaired and polished, and all historic windows will be restored along with the brick, pre-cast and terra cotta facade. From the third floor up, the original hotel corridor walls along with the original doors and hardware will remain. Apartments will be constructed on all floors of the project. On the roof, the original solarium will be restored with a large balcony overlooking the Hampton Roads Harbor, Chesapeake Bay and historic Fort Monroe.

"Our objective is to complete the required demolition work and maintain as much of the original structure as possible," said Larson.



Much of the interior walls are being demolished to make way for 130 upscale apartments.



District gains two new offices in the face of BRAC

Story by Patrick Bloodgood

When the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission recommendations became law, an additional one-billion dollars worth of new military construction-related work over a three-year period awaits the Technical Services Division (TSD). Along with the bonus of added funding and work, the Norfolk District is also the Army's Centers of Standardization for eight major military construction and design programs. All of these responsibilities fall on the shoulders of TSD Chief Bill Sorrentino for oversight, which is why he recommended to the command that the District's Regulatory and Real Estate branches be spun off into their own stand-alone offices. He could then focus his attention on the upcoming work.

"With my attention being drawn toward the Engineering and Construction branches in light of BRAC 2005 and our Centers of Standardization, it makes sense to have Real Estate and Regulatory stand on their own," said Sorrentino.

"It makes sense to have Real Estate and Regulatory stand on their own." - Bill Sorrentino, C,TSD

For customers and employees of the new offices, little or no change will be noticed, according to the new office chiefs. "The change is mainly going to affect me and my section chiefs," said Regulatory Branch Chief, Bob Hume. "If a citizen doesn't agree with a decision or finding that we have made, it will go to the section chief, then to me. Instead of going to Mr. Sorrentino, it now goes straight to the Colonel."

It's a smooth transition for all parties, commented Chief of Real Estate, Dillard Horton. "They all will continue to work with the same people; the only difference is whom I answer to," added Horton.

According to Sorrentino, if the moves don't work out, then the offices could once again be absorbed by TSD, but in the meantime, he gets to focus on the task of handling the district's future BRAC work.

"We have a huge customer like Fort Lee, who is getting new commands coming in as a result of BRAC 2005," said Sorrentino. "We are talking about hiring 5 to 20 people in Engineering Branch and 25 to 100 people in Construction Branch. This is a huge task. It is going to require a lot of my time, and it's not fair to all parties involved for me to be stretched too thin."

A Note from the Editor: *Tides In Brief* debuts in October

As many of you have noticed, the *District Tides* has undergone a dramatic transformation since my arrival here last October. One of the more dramatic changes includes a brand new graphics package and layout.

In our ongoing effort to keep district employees and our customers informed with current and relevant information, the Norfolk District Public Affairs Office will launch a new publication in October, called, *Tides In Brief*. This new monthly newsletter will provide brief information on the happenings and events that are of interest to district employees.

District Tides will still be published the last month of every fiscal quarter; *Tides In Brief* will be published months one and two of every quarter. It will feature short, concise, current

information aimed at filling in the gaps – or to quote Joe Friday, "Just the facts, ma'am."

More changes are also in the works for *District Tides* over the next few months, mainly regarding layout and design, as we continue to fine-tune your *District Tides*.

We also plan to conduct a readership survey this winter to gauge your likes, dislikes and what you would like to read about in future editions of the *District Tides* and *Tides In Brief*. As one of the District Commander's primary means



for disseminating information to employees here, your feedback during the *District Tides* and *Tides in Brief* readership survey is critical and will help our staff better support your needs and meet the Commander's command information goals.

Enjoy this current edition of *District Tides* and be sure to look for *Tides In Brief*, starting in

October!

Happy Reading,
Patrick Bloodgood

Editor, *District Tides/Tides In Brief*

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